

To: Smith, Paula[Smith.Paula@epa.gov]
From: Trulove, Whitney
Sent: Mon 8/10/2015 3:55:15 PM
Subject: for review: draft internal comm on GKM

Title of email: Update on Gold King Mine Response

By now you have likely heard of the Gold King Mine release that occurred on August 5, 2015. EPA was conducting an investigation of the mine to assess the on-going water releases from the mine, to treat the mine water and to assess the feasibility of further mine remediation. The plan was to excavate the loose material that had collapsed into the cave entry back to the timbering. During the excavation, the loose material gave way, opening the adit (mine tunnel) and spilling the water stored behind the collapsed material into Cement Creek, a tributary of the Animas River.

Initial estimates were that the release contained approximately one million gallons of water that was held behind unconsolidated debris near an abandoned mine portal. As of August 10, 2015, the estimate of water released from the mine is 3 million gallons. There were several workers at the site at the time of the breach, all were unharmed. The mine water, containing heavy metals, has been flowing down the Animas River and subsequent tributaries.

EPA has been coordinating with ATSDR in response to public health concerns/questions associated with the mine waste plume. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Colorado Division of Wildlife are assessing impacts to wildlife. Region 8 has also been coordinating with Region 6 and Region 9 and the states of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and the Southern Ute Tribe. Potentially impacted water systems have been notified and precautions are in place to ensure drinking water in homes is protected.

EPA has approximately 40 staff working round-the-clock on the response. We would like to thank everyone who worked over the weekend on the response, as well as Technical and Management Services staff who are making sure the response staff have all the resources they need to do the work.

For the latest information on the response work, see this website:
http://epaossc.org/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=11082

La Plata County also has a website: <http://www.co.laplata.co.us/emergency>

Thanks - Whitney

Whitney Trulove

EPA Region 8, Denver

Office of Communications & Public Involvement

Phone: 303-312-6099

From: Smith, Paula

Sent: Saturday, August 08, 2015 5:57 PM

To: Trulove, Whitney

Subject: Sorry for the delay

Attached is the desk statement providing facts for the entire project. I would maybe just use the first paragraph to explain what happened. Then,

Over 40 EPA folks and our contractors here in the region and on-the-ground in Durango, Silverton, NM, and with the Navajo Nation and Southern Ute are working round the clock to support the clean-up effort. And we'll try to get a bit more detail for you on who's out there from here- including, Libby, Cynthia, Hays Griswald, Dan Hall, from Region 8. Can be brief but just want to recognize all the hard work and coordination across R8 with R6 and R9.

- Paula